



# The Reality of Freedom



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## Chapter 1 by Brock Thompson

There is no freedom in this world. They say there is, sure, but there's really not. There is simply an illusion of freedom, and that's good enough for most people.

Not for me.

In this world, people think they have free will, and they do at the beginning, but then it fades. All those bills, social pressure, morals and decency, they hold you back as you progress. They chip away at your freedom, your will, your deepest and biggest dreams.

I don't want to stop dreaming.

## Chapter 2 by Alice Lin



I can't dream. I toss around at night, squeezing my eyes shut, praying for the sleep to come, but they won't come.

When the morning comes, I simply open my eyes.

I watch drops of diluted coffee drip out of the coffee machine, my eyes bleary. I roll my shoulders, and hear the popping of my neck. I look out the window, and see the sun rising over the hills. Of the bills, the pressure to top out my status, the expectations of my family, I think of the countryside, four little brothers and three little sisters.

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I haven't slept for a week now, since the taxes has risen. Thirty percent of taxes just off of everyday grocery shopping. Imagine the property tax, then the travelling tax, phoning tax, mailing tax. And there are quite some more. Tax for everything. If I don't contact my family, I probably would have more money to spare. Just depositing money to them cost ten percent tax. Of the bill you are sending. If I am sending a thousand dollars, that would be a hundred dollars tax.

Then electricity and water bills.

They just keep coming.

I go to school by bus. The University, best school there can ever be. I am working on my master's degree in mechanical engineering, and doubling that a master's in mathematics. I am the first person ever to step out of my little colony to attend the university. Around the university, which is literally the centre of this world, is the central ring, which is where I live. It is the closest to the University, and therefore cost less travelling tax. The price of the condos and houses here though, are quite expensive, but there is also less tax on these properties. I figure if I can find a condo cheap enough, maybe I will be able to spare more money.

My little condo is a two room apartment, a kitchen and another room. The kitchen where I barely cook because I simply cannot afford those fresh food, which cost more, with considerably more tax because it requires man-power. Instant meals are much cheaper and have below one percent tax because those are machine made. In total, I own a microwave, a tiny oven, a coffee maker, and a little metal jug for boiling water. I also have a frying pan, a present from my parents, but the mailing price plus the tax adds up to way more than what a frying pan would cost. I also have a little pot, on occasions when I really want a hot bowl of soup or noodles. The other room holds a single metal bed and a table. I have a Notepad and a touch-screen laptop, gifts from my parents before I left home. They are way out of date now, but I simply cannot afford to update them.

I do not have an account at any bank. I have a little security box in my house that holds basically

all the money I earn out of three part-time jobs and being a TA for some professors at school.

Well, that, and my important files. See more of Story Wars

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That aside, I own an entire house. It is important and a student can be kicked out of the University for their social inactivity. I also keep a journal about

the people I meet everyday, and although not everyone does that, I simply do it to show to the public that I care about my status.

I have worked hard to get into the University, I am not getting kicked out because I can't socialize with others.

I have chosen to major in philosophy at first, but my parents talked me out of it because imagination is a dangerous thing. So I chose something that does not require much creativity. Like mathematics and mechanical engineering. Double major. Yup.

I see greyness in my future.

I want to dream.

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